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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



[The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this Department.]

DEAR EDITOR: I noticed in this morning's paper a wail from the normal school for want of applicants,—verily prosperity has also its problems. The reason those in authority advanced was “too much prosperity.” I would also add the smaller families; the “quiverful” has become a thing of the past. I knew families of six to eight and even ten girls in my childhood, imagine!

M. T. F.

A TYPHOID TUB

A country call—who will take it? It will be hard, yes, but then you know most country calls have their compensations as well.

You may find that the people are either wealthy or well to do planters, then there will usually be sufficient to do with; it may be that there is plenty of money but no idea how to spend it for making the surroundings comfortable; and again the family may be in straightened circumstances yet anxious that no expense shall be spared to bring the dear one back to life. Shall I take it? Yes.

Sure enough the people were found to be in fairly comfortable circumstances and willing to obtain anything possible for the needs or comfort of the little patient—a girl of about twelve.

It was a case of typhoid fever. The doctor prescribed baths and left it to the discretion of the nurse if they were to be tub or sponge.

Sponge baths did not have as pleasing an effect as desired. The father said, “I will buy a tub.” Forthwith he went to the nearby town and brought back a porcelain tub, bathroom size. The poor man had done his best but it was utterly impracticable, so putting my wits together and calling to my aid an old negro about the place, an adequate tub was devised, first two saw horses and then, uniting them with scantling at the ends and of the required length along the sides, the frame was made. Next, a piece of heavy coffee-sacking was nailed along the sides and at one end. This was lined with rubber sheeting leaving both sacking and sheeting free at one end so that they could

be wrapped about the scantling during the bath to hold the water in and let down afterward to empty the tub. The device was quite adequate, the tub baths were more effectual and better borne than the sponges, and all parties were happy and well pleased. The compensations in the way of gratitude and goodwill were all that could be desired.

It may be that the suggestion may be of use to some other nurse doing country nursing.

KATHERINE DENT.

DEAR EDITOR: Would it be possible to have something in regard to open registries in the JOURNAL? We started a registry in this city last spring but were obliged to confine it to our own graduates in order to placate those who did not or would not see the necessity for any registry and would have none at all if it were not an open one. Those who wish to keep out the outsiders are almost all Canadian nurses, recently graduated. The older graduates, also Canadians, with one or two exceptions, want an open registry and hope to be able to obtain one.

R.

DEAR EDITOR: I did not deem it necessary to correct the statements made by Miss Wyche or Miss Cabaniss on "Conditions in the South" as there seemed nothing definite in their assertions, at least I supposed their remarks pertained to their section of the South, Virginia and Maryland, but when my next door neighbor from Mississippi attempts to correct them, I am compelled to sit up and take notice.

The first school for nurses ever chartered south of the Mason and Dixon line, was granted by the state of Tennessee, October, 1887, and is known as the Memphis Training School for Nurses. The first Superintendent of this school was Miss Winifred Hatch, a graduate of Miss Hampton's from the Illinois Training School.

It may be possible that the New Orleans school ranks second, but I am under the impression that Galveston, Texas, might claim this honor. The first superintendent of the John Seely Hospital, of Galveston, was a Miss Fick, a graduate of Mount Sinai Hospital, of New York.

Excluding a couple or more years in the Army Nurse Corps I have been actively engaged in the practice of my profession since 1889 and associated with a firm of physicians and surgeons who are well known, Drs. R. B. and J. M. Maury. I am, therefore, in a position to know something about conditions in this section of the country, and I am grieved to think that I have missed that harvest Miss Bushey alludes

to, which is ready to be gathered. I receive many visits from strange nurses from all over the country, especially in the fall and spring, and extend to each worthy nurse a hearty welcome. While I keep on my desk a register for these nurses, they will testify to my misfortune in missing this harvest for them, and I will gladly answer any nurse who wishes to investigate.

An institution in the south consisting of twenty-five or thirty beds is considered a fair sized hospital and I advocate an organized training school in connection, for I know some of our best and most successful nurses are graduates from such schools, but I am opposed to every cross-road attempting to run a training school where even the head nurse occupies the position in name only. They call these wonderful places private hospitals, and the wonderful cutting, surgery; but the most wonderful of all are the two or three pupils whom they call the training school, Heaven forbid such conditions.

We have about the same difficulty in securing competent nurses for institutions of standing as in the east or west. When the institution can pay the price, it gets what it wants.

There is one remedy I trust Jackson, Vicksburg, Meridian, Greenville and Natchez, Mississippi will avail themselves of, and that is to see to their school charters and that all diplomas are signed properly, not merely a certificate. Organization conditions can be remedied here if each will give a little energy and time; it is a duty our profession demands; it is a debt we owe and the woman who shirks it, is not worthy the honored name of nurse.

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